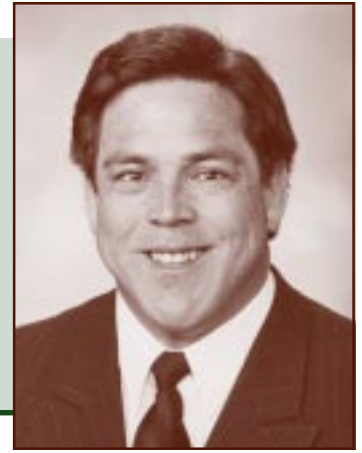




**Representative  
Barry Sehl in**

# 2001 10<sup>th</sup> District Report

*Serving the citizens of Island and portions  
of Snohomish and Skagit counties*



**Representative  
Kelly Barlean**

## **Your 10<sup>th</sup> District Team**

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February 2001

Dear Friends,

Voters made history once again by electing an evenly divided House of Representatives, made up of 49 Republicans and 49 Democrats. With so much at stake this year, it's critical that we put the frustrations of the recent election behind us and turn our attention to the needs of the citizens. The 2001 session will require unprecedented civility and bipartisanship.

The biggest issue looming is the two-year operating budget, which is already showing a substantial deficit. The cost of simply continuing current services combined with the cost of the mandated pay raises and education initiatives approved by voters in November will exceed our available revenues by several hundred million dollars. We will be challenged to find significant cost reductions, hopefully without diminishing important services.

It is truly an honor for us to be back in Olympia representing the families of the 10th District. The 2001 session promises to be a very important and very challenging one, and we welcome your ideas and concerns. Attached you'll find a brief questionnaire. Please take the time to share your opinions about which issues are important to you. Your ideas will help make us more effective as we work to represent our communities.

Sincerely,

Barry Sehl in  
State Representative

Kelly Barlean  
State Representative

# 10th District

## Rep. Kelly Barlean • Rep. Barry Sehlin

### State budget facing significant deficit

#### Lawmakers asked to do more with less

Washington voters have laid out some challenging parameters for lawmakers as we work to write a two-year operating budget this year. Voters have adopted major new spending initiatives, such as mandated teacher pay raises. At the same time they've approved significant tax reductions, as well as the voter-approved spending limit passed in 1993. While these seem to be competing proposals, we think it's important to respect and adhere to ALL of the voter mandates.

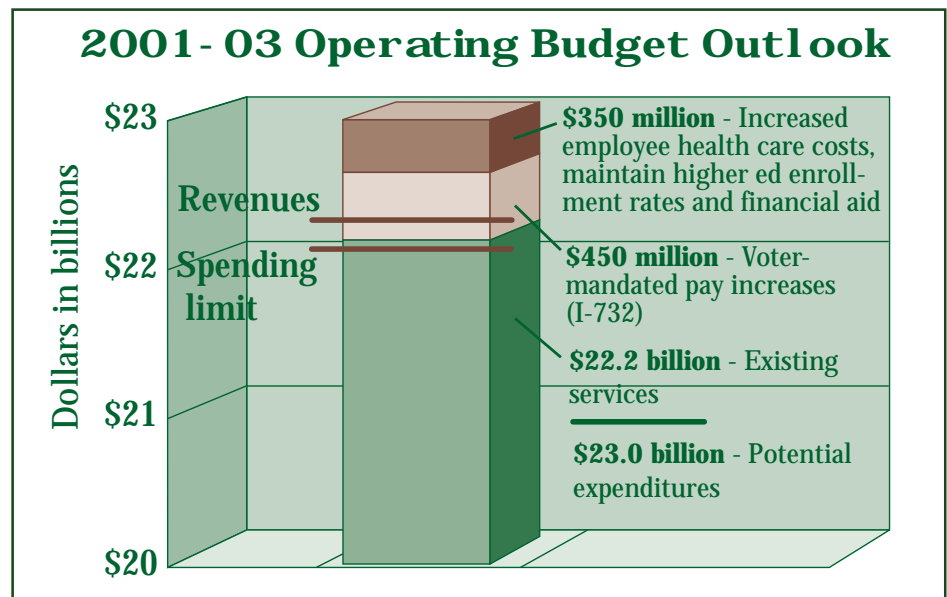
Some lawmakers have suggested that the education spending initiatives give lawmakers license to break the spending limit. We disagree. The message from citizens to lawmakers is do more with less. It won't be easy, but that's why we were sent here.

The cost of simply continuing current policies plus paying for new spending mandates approved by voters will exceed available revenues by more than half a billion dollars. Very simply, that means we must reduce the amount we spend on existing services.

We have higher costs, due to rising health care expenses and energy rates. At the same time we want to keep our schools strong and protect citizens who truly need assistance, such as care for the medically indigent and the developmentally disabled. It is incumbent upon us to find responsible spending reductions without harming important services.

While we laud the governor's efforts to identify spending cuts, we believe some of his budget decisions are off the mark, such as the cuts in assistance he's proposed for long-term care and services to the medically indigent. We must work harder to make more responsible spending cuts. We will look at ways to eliminate bureaucracy and reduce administrative costs without harming citizens genuinely in need of help.

And we are always mindful of the taxpayers, who work to take care of their families at home and have made it clear that they are not in the mood for higher taxes. That's why it's imperative that we develop a budget that is sustainable – a budget that meets the needs of citizens not only this year but into the future, even in the event of an economic down turn.



#### Transportation funding is a blank slate

Lawmakers will go back to the drawing board this year in an effort to provide a stable long-term source of funding for our state's transportation needs. With the purchasing power of the gas tax on the decline and the motor vehicle excise tax a thing of the past, lawmakers will have to look at new ways of funding sorely needed improvements to make our highways safer and keep our ferries running.

Some lawmakers are already calling for tax hikes, but House Republicans continue to insist that tax increases are an absolute last resort. We will also be looking closely at the transportation agency to see if we can find efficiencies and eliminate administrative costs to free up more money to go directly into our roads.

# 2001 Session Report

## Energy market commands attention

### New generation and conservation needed

The volatility in the energy market this winter has brought into focus the need for changes in our state's energy policies. Low water supplies have limited our power generation capacity here in the Northwest, while the restructuring of the energy market in California has resulted in skyrocketing electricity costs and suspicions of profiteering.

The increase in our energy costs is taking its toll on our economy, as well as

family budgets. It is taking money out of our pockets and sending it out of state. We need a policy that will once again stabilize the market for Washington consumers.

We applaud the governor for his conservation efforts. With our history of having abundant, affordable energy, we have lost focus on the importance of energy conservation. We also need to clear a regulatory path that will lead to the development of new, clean sources of energy for our state.



## Expecting stronger performance from our schools

Parents want to know that schools are safe and that their children are being prepared for a new century. That means having quality teachers in our classrooms and greater accountability in our schools -- goals that both Republicans and Democrats can support.

We have worked hard to set higher standards in our schools and increase the expectations of our students.

Some are responding with improved scores and performance. Some still need help. Now is not the time to abandon our efforts.

We must rededicate ourselves to reaching these standards, giving teachers the tools to improve learning and giving parents greater control over their children's education.

## 10th District Budget Team

Despite the bleak budget forecast, we are honored to serve as co-chair and vice-chair of the House Appropriations Committee. We will be working with our Republican and Democrat colleagues to craft our state's two-year operating budget. We are committed to providing the 10th District with a strong voice in the budget process. The 2001 session is scheduled to last 105 days, and while we face tremendous challenges, they are not insurmountable.



*In addition to serving as Vice chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Barlean is a member of the House Capital Budget Committee and House Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee.*



*Rep. Sehlin has been appointed as co-chair of the House Appropriations Committee, which is responsible for writing the state's two-year operating budget. Rep. Barlean is vice chair of the committee.*

# We want to know what's important to you!

Please rank the following issues on a scale of one to seven, with one being very important and seven being not important to you. If you want more information on the progress of issues that are important to you, please provide an address or e-mail address, and we'll be glad to keep you informed.

Once you've completed the survey, return it to Rep. Barlean's office at P.O. Box 40600, Olympia, WA 98504-0600.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Taxes and spending
- \_\_\_\_\_ Education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prescription drug costs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic congestion and safety
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ferries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Environment
- \_\_\_\_\_ State regulations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Energy costs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crime/Public safety
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ Please send more information on the issues I've indicated are most important to me.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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10<sup>th</sup> District  
Report

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